



The AgriMissouri Advantage

Upcoming Events and Activities...



- April 19 - Missouri FFA Association Career and Trade Show, Hearnes Field House, Columbia. A 'Taste of AgriMissouri' display will feature several Missouri companies encouraging FFA chapters to sell Missouri products in their fundraising programs. The Governor's Award for Marketing will be presented that evening.
- August 8-18 - AgriMissouri Market at the Missouri State Fair. AgriMissouri will display and sell Missouri-made products in the Ag Building during the 2002 Missouri State Fair.
- August 24-25 - Missouri Grocers Association Convention and Marketing Expo at Tan-Tar-A resort in Osage Beach.

Do you KNOW –Specialty Crops?

Missouri producers will once again have the option of double cropping winter wheat with buckwheat for 2002. Minn-Dak Growers, Ltd., a specialty grain crops company headquartered in North Dakota, is offering acreage contracts in Missouri for buckwheat for the third consecutive year in Missouri. Minn-Dak is the largest processor and exporter of buckwheat in the U.S. The company primarily exports buckwheat to Japan for use in "soba" noodles, but also markets buckwheat for other uses and to other countries.

The current contract price is 12.5 cents per pound delivered to Grand Forks, ND. Trucking can be arranged for roughly 2 cents per pound via firms that have a back haul to reduce expenses. Minn-Dak will contract only for their own proprietary buckwheat varieties, so prospective producers should contact the company directly at (701) 746-7453 to obtain a copy of the contract and to inquire about seed. Seed costs typically run \$15 per acre. Farm yields in north Missouri, planted in late July, have ranged from 800 to 1,500 pounds per acre when a good stand is established. Buckwheat yields are better when planted in late July compared to early July, as the crop needs cooler nights during the flowering stage to get good seed development.

About a half a million acres of wheat in central and northern Missouri are left idle after harvest, in many cases because the growing season is too short to double crop with soybeans. For the northern half of Missouri, buckwheat or sunflowers are a good choice to provide extra income for farmers by double cropping with wheat. The Market Development Division has partnered with the Thomas Jefferson Institute to assist farmers with specialty crop opportunities and answer production questions. Amy Bax, Specialty Crop Marketing Specialist, can be reached at (573) 751-0736. Buckwheat and sunflower publications are available on the Thomas Jefferson Institute website at www.jeffersoninstitute.org, or can be obtained by calling (573) 449-3518.

A Fishy Story

The Missouri Aquaculture Association held its annual convention February 12-13, 2002, at the Ramada Inn in Jefferson City. Of the many topics discussed, much attention was given to a concept for an aquaculture training facility at the Waynesville Technical Academy. The concept was presented by Jim Kahrs, owner of Osage Catfisheries Inc., in Osage Beach. The facility considered for this venture is privately owned but currently empty and well built to provide opportunities for an aquaculture training facility.

Those who attended the first meeting in Waynesville represented the following agencies and organizations: Waynesville Technical Academy, Ozark Fisheries, Missouri Department of Conservation, University of Missouri-Rolla, Osage Catfisheries, Missouri Enterprise, Missouri Department of Agriculture, and Tom Sowers, facility owner. Also attending were Representative Bill Ransdall and Senator John Russell. The group toured the facility and then discussed its potential. Everyone present was in favor of the idea and each person was asked to bring a list of goals for the facility to the next meeting. The next step will most likely involve a feasibility study.

The project has great potential as an education and research tool benefiting all those involved in the aquaculture industry. For more information, contact Bart Hawcroft, aquaculture specialist with the Missouri Department of Agriculture at 573-526-6666 or E-mail to Bart_Hawcroft@mail.mda.state.mo.us.

Advantage On Line

The *AgriMissouri Advantage* can now be found on line under the AgriMissouri heading of the Market Development page on the Missouri Department of Agriculture web site. Our web address is:

www.mda.state.mo.us

From the Department of Agriculture home page, search for AgriMissouri under the heading Market Development. To get the best quality, magnify to read the

Take A Tour of Missouri with AgriMissouri...

The AgriMissouri program is a marketing program offered by the Missouri Department of Agriculture that identifies products grown, processed, or manufactured in Missouri. Today more than ever, consumers are faced with many choices. Research has shown that when Missourians have the ability to choose a local product, they choose Missouri, because they like to know their dollars are supporting fellow Missourians, and friends and relatives in their local community. The companies highlighted in this article have been successful in finding ways to add value to their farm products.

Mighty MO Munchies, Oregon

What started as a college student's marketing project has turned into a soybean snack that is marketed nationwide. During her senior year at Southwest Missouri State University, Heidi Hall, daughter of Dwight and Rosemary Hall, was presented with the challenge of "inventing" a food product that had never been on the market before. She presented her creation - a high protein, low fat soybean snack - to an audience of classmates and professors. After sampling the healthy (but delicious) product, the skeptical classmates and teacher became excited about the possibilities. Heidi's professor encouraged her to pursue the project, and after months of experimenting and hard work, Mighty Mo Munchies was born. The new family business was a value-added concept that helped the Hall family farm survive a financially difficult time for agriculture. They are now contracting with other Missouri farmers to purchase approximately 3500 bushels of organic soybeans each year. Learn more about this innovative business at www.mightymomunchies.com.



Harrison Fish Farm, Hurdland

In 1990, Curtis Harrison purchased an existing pond stocking business for additional income while working on his parent's farm. He quickly realized that this hobby/business had great potential, and he has expanded the farm annually ever since. Currently, the farm has more than one hundred acres of water raising several varieties of fish. Curt's father, Robert Harrison, joined him in his endeavor in 1997. They sold their cattle herd in the fall of 2000 to focus on fish production, ending nearly half a century of cattle and swine production on their farm. The Harrison's have been active in the Missouri Aquaculture Association, and have worked with the Department of Agriculture to promote aquaculture in Missouri.

Arcobasso Foods, St. Louis

Arcobasso Foods, owned by the Newshem family, is a full-service custom manufacturer and bottler of salad dressings, sauces and marinades. The company began in 1987 with the idea of marketing the Arcobasso Famous Creamy Italian salad dressing. Arcobasso has been very involved with the AgriMissouri program. They have helped many Missouri food companies through the entire process of bringing a recipe to reality. Arcobasso services include



ingredient formulation, lab testing, UPC code, label design, and retail marketing. For more information, visit their website at www.arcobasso.com.

Campbell's Fresh Market, Clever

In 1995 Mike and Lana Campbell started growing fresh produce to earn additional income. Their hobby quickly turned into a small business as Mike continued to work off the farm. With the help of the Missouri Department of Agriculture, farming eventually became their primary source of income. By 1997 the Campbell's were farming more than 20 acres of vegetable crops. They currently farm more than 50 acres, producing 26 different varieties of fresh produce. They also have a country retail store, and a corn maze for the entire family to enjoy. More information about Mike and Lana's farm can be found at www.campbellsmazedaze.com.

A Taste of the Kingdom, Kingdom City

Missouri family farmers Julie and Mark Price own a Taste of the Kingdom. They manufacture and sell a line of gourmet pepper jellies and horseradish jelly. The jellies are designed for use as a condiment, glaze or baste on meats, breads, cheese, poultry, seafood, or even wild game. The company's mission is "to make all natural, value-added, ready-to-serve products using produce from local family farms. We apply organic methods of farming to ensure quality produce which we use in making products for our customers who want great homemade taste and easy to prepare food." With the assistance of AgriMissouri staff and a sustainable agriculture demonstration grant from the Missouri Department of Agriculture, they contracted with ten Missouri farmers to grow approximately 25,000 chili pepper plants during the 2001 season. Visit them on the web at www.tasteofkingdom.com and check out the recipe of the month!

AgriMissouri Happenings...

Breakfast with AgriMissouri

The Missouri Department of Agriculture, the AgriMissouri Program, and Missouri's commodity groups sponsored the first Breakfast with AgriMissouri to promote Missouri products and the state's vital agriculture industry during National Agriculture Week. On March 14, 2002, AgriMissouri was at the Capitol, serving breakfast to legislators, their staff, and visitors. The breakfast offered commodity groups the opportunity to showcase their finest products, as well as interact with legislators and staff members.

The Missouri Egg Council provided eggs for made-to-order omelets. Several commodity associations provided a wide variety of ingredients, allowing each customer to create their own perfect omelet. The following groups donated breakfast items:

Ham - Missouri Pork Association
Pecans - Missouri Nut Growers
Smoked Trout - Missouri Aquaculture Association
Green Peppers, Onions - Missouri Vegetable Producers Association
Milk - Central Dairy
Butter - Midwest Dairy Association
Cheese - Missouri Dairy Association
Salsa - Ray's Gourmet Salsa
Grape Juice - St. James Winery
Apple Cider - Missouri Apple Marketing Council
Muffins - Blueberry Council of Missouri, and Hammons Products Company
Fruit Salad with Honey Dressing - Missouri State Beekeepers Association.

To celebrate National Agriculture Week, the Missouri Department of Agriculture planned its very own Show-Me AgriMissouri Week, March 17-23. The breakfast was a wonderful and tasty way to call attention to National Agriculture Week. Activities included tours of local farms, and gifts of Missouri food and value-added agriculture products presented to elected officials.

Meat, Sausages, & More

The Missouri Association of Meat Processors (MAMP) annual trade show and convention was held March 1-2, 2002, at the Holiday Inn Executive Center in Columbia.

AgriMissouri again purchased several booths and invited AgriMissouri companies to exhibit their products to the meat processors attending the conference. This is an excellent opportunity for processors with mail order catalogs, gift boxes, retail store operations, and catering businesses to find Missouri products. Response to the products on display was outstanding! Many MAMP members are also members of the AgriMissouri Program and enjoy the opportunity to visit with other local food processors.

Five AgriMissouri companies, all first time exhibitors, accepted the invitation to participate in the *AgriMissouri Tasters Gallery*.

Buck Creek BBQ, Rocheport – BBQ sauce
Classic Lady Packaging, St. Charles – seasonings
Blues Hog Cookers, Perry – BBQ sauce and seasoning
Oak & Acorn Country, Mt. Vernon – seasonings for dips and cheeses
Ray's Gourmet Foods, Spanish Lake – salsa

All five participants enjoyed the show and look forward to working with other AgriMissouri companies in promoting and selling their products.

For the second consecutive year AgriMissouri sponsored a "Voted Missouri's Best," trophy for a special taste test competition. The contest entries were placed at different booths around the show and were judged by show attendees and exhibitors.

Meet the Staff



Chris Heard joined the Missouri Department of Agriculture as an AgriMissouri promotion specialist in May of 2001. He graduated from Missouri Western State College in May of 2000 with a degree in communications. While in college, Chris served as president of the campus activities board, and as chair of the homecoming committee.

Before joining the AgriMissouri program, Chris worked with the Senior PGA tour. He was raised in Buffalo, Missouri, and was active in FFA and athletics while attending Buffalo High School. In 1995, he was president of the Buffalo FFA.

Chris works with AgriMissouri companies to help them find new or expanded markets. He has traveled extensively throughout the state to visit many of the people he helps. He is also working on the 2002 AgriMissouri Buyer's Guide, and is developing a database of food brokers and distributors in Missouri. Chris can be reached at 573-751-6808, or E-mail to Chris_Heard@mail.mda.state.mo.us.

Spotlight On Future Events...

'Promoting AgriMissouri Products Pays'

The winners of the first *Promoting AgriMissouri Products Pays* Contest, highlighted in last month's Advantage, will be announced at the 2002 Missouri State FFA Convention. The winning FFA chapter will be awarded a check for \$1,000. The contest, designed to increase sales of Missouri products and encourage FFA chapters to use AgriMissouri products for fundraising, was very successful. More than \$40,000 worth of Missouri products were sold during the contest. Plans for an improved and expanded contest in 2003 will also be announced during the convention.

The AgriMissouri program helps FFA chapters find Missouri-made products by bringing producers, students, and advisors together at the annual convention. Missouri companies are invited to exhibit at the FFA Association Career Show, held in conjunction with the convention on April 19, 2002.

For more information about the contest, contact Carolyn Mullins at 1-888-MO-BRAND, or Fax 573-751-2868, or E-mail Carolyn at Carolyn_Mullins@mail.mda.state.mo.us.

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